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English Literature Series
General Editor:—J. H. FOWLER, M.A.

A FIRST BOOK OF MODERN POETRY



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TORONTO

A First Book of Modern Poetry

Selected and arranged by

H. A. Treble, M.A.

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CROYDON,
October, 1923.

I.

THE WINDMILL

The green corn waving in the dale,
The ripe grass waving on the hill :
I lean across the paddock pale
And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
Cut thro' the air : with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Beside his sacks the miller stands
On high within the open door :
A book and pencil in his hands,
His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave the wind
Is busy with his work to-day :
From whence soe'er he comes to grind ;
He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin.
The circling millstones faster flee.
The shuddering timbers groan within,
And down the shoot the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
And doth not much his work o'eylook :
He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
The figures in his dusty book.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

2.

IN SEARCH OF A HARE

THE sky was cloudless overhead,
 And just alive with larks a-singing ;
 And in a twinkling I was swinging
 Across the windy hills, lighthearted.
 A kestrel at my footstep started,
 Just pouncing on a frightened mouse,
 And hung o'er head with wings a-hover ;
 Through rustling heath an adder darted :
 A hundred rabbits bobbed to cover :
 A weasel, sleek and rusty-red, 10
 Popped out of sight as quick as winking :
 I saw a grizzled vixen slinking
 Behind a clucking brood of grouse
 That rose and cackled at my coming :
 And all about my way were flying
 The peewit, with their slow wings creaking ;
 And little jack-snipe darted, drumming :
 And now and then a golden plover
 Or redshank piped with reedy whistle.
 But never shaken bent or thistle 20
 Betrayed the quarry I was seeking ;
 And not an instant, anywhere
 Did I clap eyes upon a hare.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON.

3.

THE SCARECROW

ALL winter through I bow my head
 Beneath the driving rain ;
 The North wind powders me with snow
 And blows me black again ;

At midnight 'neath a maze of stars
 I flame with glittering rime,
 And stand, above the stubble, stiff
 As mail at morning-prime.
 But when that child, called Spring, and all
 His host of children, come, 10
 Scattering their buds and dew upon
 These acres of my home,
 Some rapture in my rags awakes ;
 I lift void eyes and scan
 The skies for crows, those ravening foes
 Of my strange master, Man.
 I watch him striding lank behind
 His clashing team, and know
 Soon will the wheat swish body high
 Where once lay sterile snow ; 20
 Soon shall I gaze across a sea
 Of sun-begotten grain,
 Which my unflinching watch hath sealed
 For harvest once again.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

4. THE SONG OF THE SOU' WESTER

THE sun was lost in a leaden sky,
 And the shore lay under our lee ;
 When a great Sou' Wester hurricane high
 Came rollicking up the sea.
 He played with the fleet as a boy with boats
 Till out for the Downs we ran,
 And he laugh'd with the roar of a thousand throats
 At the militant ways of man :

*Oh ! I am the enemy most of might,
 The other be who you please !*

10

*Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.*

A dozen of middies were down below
Chasing the X they love,
While the table curtseyed long and slow
And the lamps were giddy above.
The lesson was all of a ship and a shot,
And some of it may have been true,
But the word they heard and never forgot
Was the word of the wind that blow :

*Oh ! I am the enemy most of might,
The other be who you please !
Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.*

The Middy with luck is a Captain soon,
With luck he may hear one day
His own big guns a-humming the tune
“ ‘Twas in Trafalgar’s Bay.”
But wherever he goes, with friends or foes
And whatever may there befall,
He’ll hear for ever a voice he knows
For ever defying them all :

*Oh ! I am the enemy most of might,
The other be who you please !
Gunner and guns may all be right,
Flags a-flying and armour tight,
But I am the fellow you've first to fight—
The giant that swings the seas.*

20

30

40

HENRY NEWBOLT.

IT was early last September nigh to Framlin' am-on-Sea
 An' 'twas Fair-day come to-morrow, an' the time was after tea,
 An' I met a painted caravan adown a dusty lane,
 A Pharaoh with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak an' strain ;
 A cheery cove an' sunbuint, bold o' eye and wrinkled up,
 An' beside him on the splashboard sat a brindled tarrict pup,
 An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle-strings
 Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts and swings.

"Goo'-day," said 'e ; "Goo'-day," said I ; "an' 'ow d'you
 find things go,

An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a tiavellin'
 show ? "

"I find," said 'e, "things very much as 'ow I've always found,
 For mostly they goes up and down or else goes round and
 round."

Said 'e, "The job's the very spit o' what it always were,
 It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't catch a 'are ;
 But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no merchant king's,
 What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on the swings ! "

"Goo' luck," said 'e ; "Goo' luck," said I ; "you've put it
 past a doubt ;

An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers is out " ;
 'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on again

To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in the lane ; 20
 An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a nightjar seemed
 to spin

That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of lose-and-win ;
 For "up an' down an' round," said 'e, "goes all appointed
 things,

An' losses on the roundabouts means profits on the swings ! "

PATRICK R. CHALMERS.

6. THE PORTSMOUTH ROAD

As I went down the Portsmouth Road, a careless, rambling fellow,
The stormcock whistled on the bough a stave both loud and mellow ;
To hear his song I paused awhile, then tossed it back with laughter,
But all along the seaward road I heard it following after :

*East—west—home's best—you'll wander far and lone, lad,
But of all the lands you'll find on earth, there's none just like your own, lad.*

As I went down the Portsmouth Road my step was light and merry ;
I met a tramping gipsy wife, as brown as any berry ;
She told my fortune for a crown, but little did it please me
To hear her speaking once again the same old words to tease
me : 10

*East—west—home's best—you'll wander far and lone, lad,
But of all the lands you'll find on earth, there's none just like your own, lad.*

I wandered there, I rambled there, since I set forth that morning,
And many's the time I thought about that gipsy's word of warning ;
And many a strange far land I saw, and gaudy foreign city,
And often enough did seem to hear once more the stormcock's ditty :

*East—west—home's best—you'll wander far and lone, lad,
But of all the lands you'll find on earth, there's none just like your own, lad.*

As I came up the Portsmouth Road, my bundle on my shoulder,
 The years had come, the years had gone, and I was growing older; 20
 The wayside fires were white and cold, the leaves were turning yellow,
 And never a gipsy crossed my path, nor stormcock whistled mellow:

*East—west—home's best—you'll wander far and lone, lad,
 But of all the lands you'll find on earth, there's none just like your own, lad.*

But what cared I for silent bird, or what for fires forsaken,
 From many a land and many a sea whose homeward road was taken?
 The gipsy's words were in my heart, a fire to cheer and warm me,
 And all the way the stormcock's tune went singing on before me.

*East—west—home's best—you'll wander far and lone, lad,
 But of all the loves you'll find on earth, there's none just like your own, lad!* 30

C. FOX SMITH.

If I could be a gipsy boy and have a caravan
 I'd travel all the world, I would, before I was a man,
 We'd drive beyond the fair blue hills—us two, my horse and me—
 And on and on and on and on until we reached the sea
 And there I'd wash his legs quite clean and bid him come inside,
 Whilst I would stand upon the roof and scan the flowing tide,

And he and I would sail away and scorn the Spanish main,
And when we'd swept the Spaniards out we'd p'raps sail
home again.

Or if my horse was very tired of ships and being good,
And wanted most to stretch his legs (as many horses would) to
We'd call a whale to tow us to a desert island beach,
And there we'd search for coconuts and have a whole one each.

If I could be a gipsy boy I wouldn't bring a load
Of pots and pans and chairs and things and sell them in the
road.

Oh, if I was a gipsy boy and had a caravan
I'd see the whole wide world, I would, before I was a man.

MADE FINE NIGHTINGALE.

8.

CALLED UP

COME, tumble up, Lord Nelson, the British Fleet's a-looming !
Come, show a leg, Lord Nelson, the guns they are a-booming !
'Tis a longish line of battle,—such as we did never see :
An' 'tis not the same old round-shot as was fired by you an'
me !

What see'st thou, Sir Francis?—strange things I see appearing!
What hear'st thou, Sir Francis?—strange sounds I do be
hearing !

They are fighting in the heavens : they're at war beneath the
sea !

Ay, their ways are mighty different from the ways o' you an'
me !

See'st thou nought else, Sir Francis?—I see great lights
a-speaking !

Hearest thou nought else, Sir Francis?—I hear thin wires
a-speaking !

Three leagues that shot hath carried !—God, that such could ever be !

There's no mortal doubt, Lord Nelson—they ha' done wi' you an' me !

*Look thou again, Sir Francis !—I see the flags a-flapping !
Hearken once more, Sir Francis !—I hear the sticks a-tapping !
'Tis a sight that calls me thither !—'Tis a sound that bids me
"Come ! "*

'Tis the old Trafalgar signal !—'Tis the beating of my drum !

*Art thou ready, good Sir Francis ? See, they wait upon the
Quay !—*

Praise be to God, Lord Nelson, they ha' thought o' you an' me !

DUDLEY CLARK.

9.

OFF THE GROUND

THREE jolly Farmers
Once bet a pound
Each dance the others would
Off the ground.
Out of their coats
They slipped right soon,
And neat and nice some
Put each his shoon.
One—Two—Three !
And away they go,
Not too fast
And not too slow ;
Out from the elm-tree's
Noonday shadow,
Into the sun
And across the meadow.

Past the schoolroom,
 With knees well bent,
 Fingers a-flicking,
 They dancing went. 20
 Upsides and over,
 And round and round,
 They crossed click-clacking
 The Parish bound ;
 By Tupman's meadow
 They did their mile,
 Tee-to-tum
 On a three-barred stile.
 Then straight through Whipham
 Downhill to Week, 30
 Footing it lightsome
 But not too quick,
 Up fields to Watchet
 And on through Wye,
 Till seven fine churches
 They'd seen skip by—
 Seven fine churches,
 And five old mills,
 Farms in the valley,
 And sheep on the hills ; 40
 Old Man's Acre
 And Dead Man's Pool
 All left behind
 As they danced through Wool.
 And Wool gone by
 Like tops that seem
 To spin in sleep
 They danced in dream :
 Withy—Wellover—
 Wassop—Wo— 50
 Like an old clock
 Their heels did go.

A league and a league
And a league they went,
And not one weary
And not one spent.
And lo ! and behold !
Past Willow-cum-Leigh
Stretched with its waters
The great green sea.
Says Farmer Bates :
“ I puffs and I blows,
What’s under the water
Why, no man knows ! ”
Says Farmer Giles :
“ My mind comes weak,
And a good man drownded
Is far to seek.”
But Farmer Turvey,
On twirling toes,
Ups with his gaiters,
And in he goes :
Down where the mermaids
Pluck and play
On their twangling harps
In a sea-green day ;
Down where the mermaids,
Finned and fair,
Sleek with their combs
Their yellow hair . . .
Bates and Giles
On the shingle sat,
Gazing at Turvey’s
Floating hat.
But never a ripple
Nor bubble told
Where he was supping
Off plates of gold.

60

70

80

Never an echo
 Rilled through the sea
 Of the feasting and dancing
 And minstrelsy. 90
 They called--called--called :
 Came no reply :
 Nought but the ripples'
 Sandy sigh.
 Then glum and silent
 They sat instead
 Vacantly brooding
 On home and bed, 100
 Till both together
 Stood up and said :
 " Us knows not, dreams not
 Where you be,
 Turvey, unless
 In the deep blue sea ;
 But excusing silver--
 And it comes most willing--
 Here's us two payng
 Our forty shilling ;
 For it's sartin sure, Turvey
 Safe and sound
 You danced us square, Turvey,
 Off the ground ! " 110

WALTER DE LA MARE.

In the fold
 On the wold
 There were little young lambs,
 An' the wind blew so cold
 They laid lee o' their dams,

An' a shepherd old man
 He leaned over the cotes,
 An' a lilt he began
 With a flutter of notes,
 The little young lambs all among ;
 Oh, he piped 'em a derry down derry, he did,
 Since they were so young.

An' they stirred
 When they heard,
 Did the little young lambs,
 Then they hopped, most absurd,
 From a-lee of their dams,
 An' they jumped and they skipped
 With tip-toppetty skips,
 As the little tune tripped
 From the reed at the lips
 Of the crinkled old man o' the wold,
 As he piped 'em a meiry down derry, he did.
 Since he was so old.

For he blew
 That he knew
 Why the seasons went round,
 An' why green the wheat grew
 To his pipe's pretty sound ;
 An' why rain follows sun,
 An' how sun follows rain,
 An' how everything's done
 To be started again,
 Till the stars like ripe acorns shall fall ;
 An' he piped 'em his derry down derry, he did,
 Along of it all.

PATRICK R. CHALMERS.

11.

THE WIND

WHY does the wind so want to be
 Here in my little room with me ?
 He's all the world to blow about,
 But just because I keep him out
 He cannot be a moment still,
 But frets upon my window sill,
 And sometimes brings a noisy rain
 To help him batter at the pane.

Upon my door he comes to knock.
 He rattles, rattles at the lock,
 And lifts the latch and stirs the key-
 Then waits a moment breathlessly,
 And soon, more fiercely than before,
 He shakes my little trembling door,
 And though "Come in, come in ! " I say,
 He neither comes nor goes away.

Barefoot across the chilly floor
 I run and open wide the door ;
 He rushes in and back again
 He goes to batter door and pane,
 Pleased to have blown my candle out.
 He's all the world to blow about,
 Why does he want so much to be
 Here in my little room with me ?

10

20

E. RENDALL.

12.

RIME FAIRIES

LAST night about the country-side
 The nimble fairies flew,
 And forests on the latticed pane
 In quaint devices drew,

The grasses standing straight and tall,
 The ferns with curious frond,
 And just a peephole left to show
 The misty world beyond.

The voices of the murmuring streams
 They silenced one by one,
 And bound their feet with gleaming chains
 So they no more could run ;
 They hung the icicles about,
 And you would laugh to see
 Just how they flung the diamonds down
 Upon the whole bare tree ;
 And every little blade of grass
 A thing of beauty stood,
 And when they'd finished it was just
 Like an enchanted wood. 10

They paused beside the old barn door ;
 A spider's web hung there
 As fragile as a little dream,
 As delicate and fair ;
 They decked it with a thousand gems
 Of oh ! such dazzling sheen,
 It was the very loveliest thing
 That you have ever seen !

The sun from his soft bed of cloud
 Came pale and timidly ; 30
 He knew if he let loose his rays
 The mischief there would be ;
 He woke the sleeping world to life
 With finger-tips of gold,
 And up from meadow, wood and stream
 The shimmering mists unrolled ;
 He lit the candles of the dawn
 On every bush and tree ;

The fairies on their homing wings
 Looked back and laughed with glee,
 " We've made a Fairyland for you,
 O Mortals, wake and see."

40

M. E. MASSON.

13.

ELVES IN THE FIRE

When oaks, elms and beeches
 In drear disarray
 Against the cloud reaches
 Stand shamed to the day—
 When Beauty lies hiding
 And Summer lies dead—
 Ho ! Here they come riding,
 Our horsemen in red !

In star-studded caverns
 Where red rivers twine
 They tie up at taverns
 And roar for red wine ;
 Then red-helmeted and wrapt in
 Red cloaks they re-group
 On the cliff-edge—each captain
 In front of his troop.

10

Over trenches red-glowing
 They thunder and leap—
 Down-treading, o'erthrowing
 Tower, rampart and keep.
 Hark ! Lean down and listen !
 'Tis sabres that ring !—
 How they sweep ! How they glisten !
 Each stroke for a king !

20

There are elves in the heather
 And elves in the grass ;
 Green cap and green feather
 Peep out as we pass ;
 But give me for idol
 This hot-spurring horde—
 The rose on the biddle,
 The red on the sword !

30

W. H. OGILVIE.

14.

PUK-WUDJIES

["The Puk-Wudjies . . . the little People."—LONGFELLOW]

THEY live 'neath the curtain
 Of fir woods and heather,
 And never take hurt in
 The wildest of weather,
 But best they love Autumn—she's brown as themselves—
 And they are the brownest of all the brown elves ;
 When loud sings the West Wind,
 The bravest and best wind.
 And puddles are shining in all the cart ruts,
 They turn up the dead leaves,
 The russet and red leaves,
 Where squirrels have taught them to look out for nuts !

10

The hedge-cutters hear them
 Where berries are glowing,
 The scythe circles near them
 At time of the mowing,
 But most they love woodlands when Autumn's winds pipe,
 And all through the cover the beechnuts are ripe,
 And great spiky chestnuts,
 The biggest and best nuts,

Blown down in the ditches, fair windfalls lie cast,
 And no tree begrudges
 The little Puk-Wudjies
 A pocket of acorns, a handful of mast !

So should you be roaming
 Where branches are sighing,
 When up in the gloaming
 The moon-wrack is flying,
 And hear through the darkness, again and again,
 What's ncither the wind nor the spatter of rain—
 A flutter, a flurry,
 A scuffle, a scurry,
 A bump like the rabbits' that bump on the ground,
 A patter, a bustle
 Of small things that rustle,
 You'll know the Puk-Wudjies are somewhere around !

30

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

15.

THE SHADOW PEOPLE

OLD lame Bridget doesn't hear
 Fairy music in the grass
 When the gloaming's on the mere
 And the shadow people pass :
 Never hears their slow grey feet
 Coming from the village street
 Just beyond the parson's wall,
 Where the clover globes are sweet
 And the mushroom's parasol
 Opens in the moonlit rain.
 Every night I hear them call
 From their long and merry train.
 Old lame Bridget says to me,
 " It is just your fancy, child."

10

She cannot believe I see
 Laughing faces in the wild,
 Hands that twinkle in the sedge
 Bowing at the water's edge
 Where the finny minnows quiver,
 Shaping on a blue wave's ledge
 Bubble foam to sail the river. 20
 And the sunny hands to me
 Beckon ever, beckon ever.
 Oh ! I would be wild and free
 And with the shadow people be.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

16.

CRAB-APPLE

I DREAMED the Fairies wanted me
 To spend my birth-night with them all :
 And I said, " Oh, but you're so wee
 And I am so tremendous tall,
 What could we do ? "
 " Crab-apple stem ! "
 Said they, and I was just like them.

And then, when we were all the same.
 The party and the fun began ;
 They said they'd teach me a new game
 Of " Dew-ponds." " I don't think I can 10
 Play that," I said.
 " Crab-apple blue ! "
 Said thou, and I could play it too.

And then, when we had played and played,
 The Fairies said that we would dance ;
 And I said, " Oh, but I'm afraid
 That I've no shoes." I gave a glance

At my bare toes.
 "Crab-apple sweet!"
 Said they, and shoes were on my feet.

And then we danced away, away,
 Until my birth-night all was done ; 20
 And I said, "I'll go home to-day ;
 And thank you for my lovely fun,
 I'll come again."
 "Crab-apple red!"
 Said they, and I woke up in bed.

E. TALBOT.

SONG OF THE IRON-WORKER

CLINK, hammer, clink and clang apace ·
 Be DUNSTAN's benison on this place !
 And, that the iron may glow,
 Blow, bellows, blow !

Look ye, this iron is better far
 Than pallid gold and silver are ;
 Hark ! while I sing to you
 What it may do.

In iron cressets torches burn ;
 On iron spits the fat geese turn ; 10
 In iron chests men hold
 Their hoarded gold.

The shepherd's crook with iron is tipped ;
 The rushlight wan in iron is clipped ;
 The coulter and the spade
 Thereof are made.

Though it be cold and hard and dull,
 'Tis iron that maketh granaries full,
 That maketh furrow and field
 Their foison yield. 20

Time's solemn glass, where falls the sand,
Is held with iron loop and band ;
Till falleth his last grain
These will remain.

When ELEANOR our good Queen died,
With gilded bronze and marble pied
They wrought the tomb for her
At Westminster.

The gold will darken as years pass ;
The coloured stones will crack like glass ;
What then abideth for
QUEEN ELEANOR ?

There will abide till crack of doom
The great iron lattice on her tomb,
A glory even then
In the eyes o' men.

Clink, hammer, clink and clang apace ;
Be DUNSTAN's benison on this place !
And, lest the flame sink low,
Blow, bellows, blow !

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART (D.M.S.).

30

40

IF people came to know where my king's palace is, it would
vanish into the air.

The walls are of white silver and the roof of shining gold.
The queen lives in a palace with seven courtyards, and she
wears a jewel that cost all the wealth of seven kingdoms.
But let me tell you, mother, in a whisper, where my king's
palace is.

It is at the corner of our terrace where the pot of ~~the~~ ^{the} plant stands.

The princess lies sleeping on the far-away shore of the seven
impassable seas.

There is none in the world who can find her but myself.
She has bracelets on her arms and pearl drops in her ears ;
her hair sweeps down upon the floor.

She will wake when I touch her with my magic wand, and
jewels will fall from her lips when she smiles.

But let me whisper in your ear, mother ; she is there in the
corner of our terrace where the pot of the *tulsi* plant
stands. 10

When it is time for you to go to the river for your bath, step
up to that terrace on the roof.

I sit in the corner where the shadows of the walls meet
together.

Only puss is allowed to come with me, for she knows where
the barber in the story lives.

But let me whisper, mother, in your ear where the barber in
the story lives.

It is at the corner of the terrace where the pot of the *tulsi*
plant stands.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

19.

THE HERO

MOTHER, let us imagine we are travelling, and passing through
a strange and dangerous country.

You are riding in a palanquin and I am trotting by you on a
red horse.

It is evening and the sun goes down. The waste of *Joradighi*
lies wan and grey before us. The land is desolate and
barren.

You are frightened and thinking—"I know not where we
have come to."

I say to you, "Mother, do not be afraid."

The meadow is prickly with spiky grass, and through it runs
a narrow broken path.

There are no cattle to be seen in the wide field ; they have
gone to their village stalls.

It grows dark and dim on the land and sky, and we cannot
tell where we are going.

Suddenly you call me and ask me in a whisper, " What light
is that near the bank ? "

Just then there bursts out a fearful yell, and figures come
running towards us. 10

You sit crouched in your palanquin and repeat the names
of the gods in prayer.

The bearers, shaking in terror, hide themselves in the thorny
bush.

I shout to you, " Don't be afraid, mother, I am here."

With long sticks in their hands and hair all wild about their
heads, they come nearer and nearer.

I shout, " Have a care ! you villain ! One step more and
you are dead men."

They give another terrible yell and rush forward.

You clutch my hand and say, " Dear boy, for heaven's sake,
keep away from them."

I say, " Mother, just you watch me."

Then I spur my horse for a wild gallop, and my sword and
buckler clash against each other.

The fight becomes so fearful, mother, that it would give you
a cold shudder could you see it from your palanquin. 20

Many of them fly, and a great number are cut to pieces.

I know you are thinking, sitting all by yourself, that your boy
must be dead by this time.

But I come to you all stained with blood, and say, " Mother,,
the fight is over now."

You come out and kiss me, pressing me to your heart, and
 you say to yourself,
 " I don't know what I should do if I hadn't my boy to escort
 me."

A thousand useless things happen day after day, and why
 couldn't such a thing come true by chance ?

It would be like a story in a book.

My brother would say, " Is it possible ? I always thought
 he was so delicate ! "

Our village people would all say in amazement, " Was it not
 lucky that the boy was with his mother ? "

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

20.

STREET LANTERNS

COUNTRY roads are yellow and brown.
 We mend the roads in London town.

Never a hansom dare come nigh,
 Never a cart goes rolling by.

An unwonted silence steals
 In between the turning wheels.

Quickly ends the autumn day,
 And the workman goes his way,

Leaving, midst the traffic rude,
 One small isle of solitude,

10

Lit, throughout the lengthy night,
 By the little lantern's light.

Jewels of the dark have we,
 Brighter than the rustic's be.

Over the dull earth are thrown
 Topaz, and the ruby stone.

MARY E. COLERIDGE.

21.

THE CUCKOO

His voice runs before me ; I follow ; it flies ;
 It is now in the meadow and now in the skies :
 So blithesome, so lightsome ; now distant, now here ;
 And when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

He calls back the roses, red roses, that went
 At the first blast of winter, so red and forespent,
 With the dew in their bosoms, young roses and dear ;
 And when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

I would twine him a gold cage, but what would he do
 For his world of the emerald, his bath in the blue ? 10
 And his wee feathered comrades to make him good cheer ?
 And when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

Now, blackbird, give over your harping of gold !
 Brown thrush and green linnet, your music withhold !
 The flutes of the forest are silver and clear,
 But when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is here.

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON.

22.

THE KINGFISHER

It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
 And left thee all her lovely hues ;
 And, as her mother's name was Tears,
 So runs it in thy blood to choose
 For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
 In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
 Live with proud Peacocks in green parks ;
 On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
 Let every feather show its mark ;

Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind ;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

W. H. DAVIES.

23.

THE SQUIRREL

O SQUIRREL, would I were as you !
As nimble on a bough, as quick
To listen,—re-assured, to flick
My tail and bound across and through
Tho leafy coverts, twig-supported,
Mid rafters of some great tree's roof
Where sun soaks through the rain-drop proof,
And heavy body never sported.

Winged birds are there, and you, the red
Small playful scurrier up the bark,
Whose home is in some hollow dark
But soft and warm as any bed.
Have after you, you wingless flitter !
Race me into the topmost boughs !
What need have we for floors ? a house
Without a plank for us were fitter !

10

Teach me to swarm and climb and be
A sailor such as those who vie
—On mast and rigging dizzy high—
With you in nimbleness and glee !

20

For though a loud wind toss these branches
 A ship is handled worse by storms :
 Then to his work the sailor warms ;
 From spar to rope he daring launches.

T. STURGE MOORE.

24.

JENNY WREN

HER sight is short, she comes quite near ;
 A foot to me's a mile to her ;
 And she is known as Jenny Wren,
 The smallest bird in England. When
 I heard that little bird at first,
 Methought her frame would surely burst
 With earnest song. Oft had I seen
 Her running under leaves so green,
 Or in the grass when fresh and wet,
 As though her wings she would forget. 16
 And, seeing this, I said to her—
 “ My pretty runner, you prefer
 To be a thing to run unheard
 Through leaves and grass, and not a bird ! ”
 ’Twas then she burst, to prove me wrong,
 Into a sudden storm of song ;
 So very loud and earnest, I
 Feared she would break her heart and die.
 “ Nay, nay,” I laughed, “ be you no thing
 To run unheard, sweet scold, but sing ! 20
 O I could hear your voice near me,
 Above the din in that oak tree,
 When almost all the twigs on top
 Had starlings chattering without stop.”

W. H. DAVIES.

25.

THE TOLL-GATE HOUSE

THE toll-gate's gone, but still stands lone,
 In the dip of the hill, the house of stone,
 And over the roof in the branching pine
 The great owl sits in the white moonshine.
 An old man lives, and lonely, there,
 His windows yet on the cross-roads stare,
 And on Michaelmas night in all the years
 A galloping far and faint he hears . . .
 His casement open wide he flings
 With "Who goes there?" and a lantern swings . . . 10
 But never more in the dim moonbeam
 Than a cloak and a plume and the silver gleam
 Of passing spurs in the night can he see,
 For the toll-gate's gone and the road is free.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

26.

DAYS TOO SHORT

WHEN primroses are out in Spring,
 And small, blue violets come between ;
 When merry birds sing on boughs green,
 And rills, as soon as born, must sing ;

When butterflies will make side-leaps,
 As though escaped from Nature's hand
 Ere perfect quite ; and bees will stand
 Upon their heads in fragrant deeps ;

When small clouds are so silvery white
 Each seems a broken rimmèd moon— 10
 When such things are, this world too soon,
 For me, doth wear the veil of Night.

W. H. DAVIES.

27.

"TREASURE ISLAND"

A LOVER breeze to the roses pleaded,
 Failed and faltered, took heart and advanced :
 Up over the peaches, unimpeded,
 A great Red Admiral ducked and danced ,
 But the boy with the book saw not nor heeded,
 Reading entranced--entranced !

He read, nor knew that the fat bees bumbled ,
 He woke no whit to the tea bell's touch,
 The brownny pigeons that wheeled and tumbled
 (For how should a pirate reck of such ?)
 He read, and the flaming flower beds crumbled,
 At tap of the sea cook's crutch !

10

And lo, there leapt for him dolphins running
 The peacock seas of the buccaneer,
 Long, savage reefs where the seals lay sunning
 The curve of canvas, the creak of gear ,
 For ever the Master's wondrous cunning
 Lent him of wizard lea¹ !

But lost are the garden days of leisure,
 Lost with them wide eyed ten year old,
 Yet if you'd move to a bygone measure,
 Or shape your heart to an ancient mould,
 Maloons and schooners and buried treasure
 Wrought on a page of gold--

20

Then take the book in the dingy binding,
 Still the shadows come, bearded, great,
 And swaggering files of sea thieves winding
 Back, with their ruffing cut throat gait,
 Reclaim an hour when we first went finding
 Pieces of Eight--of Eight

30

PATRICK R. CHAMBERS.

¹ instruction (ep *lore*)

28. THE BALLAD OF SIR BORS

WOULD I could win some quiet and rest, and a little ease,
 In the cool grey hush of the dusk, in the dim green place of
 the trees,

Where the birds are singing, singing, singing, crying aloud
 The song of the red, red rose that blossoms beyond the seas.

Would I could see it, the rose, when the light begins to fail,
 And a lone white star in the West is glimmering on the mail ;
 The red, red passionate rose of the sacred blood of the Christ,
 In the shining chalice of God, the cup of the Holy Grail.

The dusk comes gathering grey, and the darkness dims the
 West,
 The oxen low to the byre, and all bells ring to rest ; 10
 But I ride over the moors, for the dusk still bides and waits,
 That brims my soul with the glow of the rose that ends the
 Quest.

My horse is spavined and ribbed, and his bones come through
 his hide,
 My sword is rotten with rust, but I shake the reins and ride,
 For the bright white birds of God that nest in the rose have
 called,
 And never a township now is a town where I can bide.

It will happen at last, at dusk, as my horse limps down the
 fell,
 A star will glow like a note God strikes on a silver bell,
 And the bright white birds of God will carry my soul to Christ,
 And the sight of the Rose, the Rose, will pay for the years of
 hell. 20

JOHN MASEFIELD.

29.

SHERWOOD

SHERWOOD in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake ?
 Grey and ghostly shadows are gliding through the brake,
 Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,
 Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again : all his merry thieves
 Hear a ghostly bugle-note, shivering through the leaves
 Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June :
 All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon
 Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist
 Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Merry, merry England is waking as of old,
 With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold :
 For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house
 Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs :
 Love is in the greenwood, dawn is in the skies,
 And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes. 20

Hark ! The dazzling laverock climbs the golden steep !
 Marian is waiting : is Robin Hood asleep ?
 Round the fairy grass-rings, frolic elf and fay,
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Oberon, Oberon, take away the gold,
 Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mould,
 Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
 And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed;

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together
 With quarter-staff and drinking-can and grey goose feather. 30
 The dead are coming back again, the years are rolled away
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows.
 All the heart of England hid in every rose
 Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,
 Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep ?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old
 And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,
 Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,
 Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep ? 40

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen
 All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men—
 Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the May
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day—

Calls them and they answer : from aisles of oak and ash
 Rings the *Follow ! Follow !* and the boughs begin to crash,
 The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly,
 And through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by.

Robin ! Robin ! Robin ! All his merry thieves
 Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves, 50
 Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
 In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

ALFRED NOYES.

THE mother looked out from the window-bay, looked over the
 woods to the sea,
 And, " Where are those four bonny boys of mine ? " and
 " Where are they gone ? " said she.

The gardener's lad with the wave-tanned face looked up from
the blush-rose bed,

"They have taken the boat and dropped on the ebb at dawn
of the day," he said.

The mother turned from the window-bay, she was fair as
a three-months' bride,

"Ah well-a-day for my four wild boys and their lust of the
sea," she sighed.

But deeper yet had the mother sighed, could she know what
the years would bring,

The gift of the sea, and the doom of the sea, and the faith of
a craven king.

A stone's throw under the windows, by dale and covert and
down,

The Dart winds home from its moorland source to the roads
and the haven town ;

10

And thither it was in an old sea-boat from their home at
Greenaway

The cager sons of the manor-house would fare for their holiday;

There were Humphry and Adrien Gilbert, with their friend
from over the moor,

The yeoman's son John Davies, to tug at the heavy oar,

And the boy that held the tiller, and the younger one at his
side,

Were the lads of Walter Raleigh, and the same fair mother's
pride.

What deeds of wild adventure they have dared on that Devon
stream

When the fabled West was an easy quest to a boy's light-
hearted dream ;

When the river-reach was their tropic sea, and the coast was
the Spanish Main,
And the blistered wreck on the ebb-tide shoal was a great
galleass of Spain. 20

And so they would come to the haven, where, moored to the
laden quays,
Were the ships at rest with their canvas furled from a hundred
marvellous seas ;

The lofty poops and the painted hulls of the beautiful ships
of old,
The carven prows and the open ports with their guns that
shone like gold ;

For the boys that were born and cradled where the breeze of
the ocean blows,
They loved those ships with a passion that only the sea child
knows.

And the Channel rovers knew them, the men of the western
shire,
And told them tales of the ocean life and the world of a boy's
desire :

There was one that had sailed with Strangways, another with
red Tremayne ;
They could tell of the Holy Office and the rule of the monk in
Spain ; 30

Of the corsair folk in the Eastern isles with the long brass guns
on deck,
Of the north sea spray, of a gale in the bay, of a fight, of a run,
of a wreck ;

Of the fur-clad folk and the frost-bound shores, where the day
and night are one,
And the drifting ice-floes sparkle to the gleam of the midnight
sun ;

But the tale that held them longest was the tale of the isles
that lie

Far over the great Atlantic and the land of the sunset sky ;

Where veiled in rumour and fable, withdrawn as a virgin bride,
The world to be wooed and conquered was a quest that was
still untried.

Then the lips would part and the eager eyes go west-ward
over the sea,

“ A little while, but a little while, and the time will come for
me.”

40

Now back—for the tide sets inland, and the mother frets in
the hall,

“ We have far to go ere the sun be low—good hap to ye,
masters all ! ”

“ God speed to ye, gentle worships—good hap to ye, honest
John,

Good luck to you, young Squire Raleigh, and keep your eye
on the Don ! ”

The mother looked out as the westering sun went under the
steep moorside,

And “ Where are those four bonny boys of mine ? they are
long from their home,” she sighed.

But deeper yet had the mother sighed, could she know what
the end would be,

The golden dream of the after years and the doom that came
from the sea.

RENNELL RODD.

31. THE THIEF AT ROBIN'S CASTLE

THERE came a Thief one night to Robin's Castle,
He climbed up into a Tree ;
And sitting with his head among the branches,
A wondrous Sight did see.

For there was Robin supping at his table,
With Candles of pure Wax,
His Dame and his two beauteous little Children,
With Velvet on their backs.

Platters for each there were shin-shining,
Of Silver many a pound, 10
And all of beaten Gold, three brimming Goblets,
Standing the table round.

The smell that rose up richly from the Baked Meats
Came thinning amid the boughs,
And much that greedy Thief who snuffed the night air—
His Hunger did arouse.

He watched them eating, drinking, laughing, talking
Busy with finger and spoon,
While three most cunning Fiddlers, clad in crimson.
Played them a supper-tune. 20

And he waited in the tree-top like a Starling,
Till the Moon was gotten low ;
When all the windows in the walls were darkened,
He softly in did go.

There Robin and his Dame in bed were sleeping,
And his Children young and fair ;
Only Robin's Hounds from their warm kennels
Yelped as he climbed the stair.

All, all were sleeping, page and fiddler,
 Cook, scullion, free from care ;
 Only Robin's Stallions from their stables
 Neighed as he climbed the stair.

30

A wee wan light the Moon did shed him,
 Hanging above the sea.
 And he counted into his bag (of beaten Silver)
 Platters thirty-thre.

Of Spoons three score ; of jolly golden Goblets
 He stowed in four save one,
 And six fine three-branched Cupid Candlesticks,
 Before his work was done.

40

Nine bulging bags of Money in a cupboard,
 Two Snuffers, and a Dish
 He found, the last all studded with great Garnets
 And shapen like a Fish.

Then tiptoe up he stole into a Chamber,
 Where on Tasselled Pillows lay
 Robin and his Dame in dreaming slumber,
 Tired with the sunner's day.

That Thief he nimbled round him in the gloaming,
 Their Treasures for to spy,
 Combs, Brooches, Chains, and Rings, and Pins and Buckles
 All higgledy piggle-dy.

50

A Watch shaped in the shape of a flat Apple
 In purest Crystal set,
 He lifted from the hook where it was ticking
 And crammed in his Pochette.

He heaped the pretty Baubles on the table,
 Trinkets, Knick-knackerie,
 Pearls, Diamonds, Sapphires, Topazes, and Opals—
 All in his bag put he.

60

And there in night's pale Gloom was Robin dreaming
 He was hunting the mountain Bear,
 While his Dame in peaceful slumber in no wise heeded
 A greedy Thief was there.

And that ravenous Thief he climbed up even higher,
 Till into a chamber small
 He crept where lay poor Robin's beauteous Children,
 Lovelier in sleep withal.

Oh, fairer was their Hair than Gold of Goblet,
 'Yond Silver their Cheeks did shine,
 And their little hands that lay upon the linen
 Made that Thief's hard heart to pine.

But though a moment there his hard heart faltered,
 Eftsoones he took them twain,
 And slipped them into his Bag with all his Plunder,
 And soft stole down again.

Spoon, Platter, Goblet, Ducats, Dishes, Trinkets,
 And those two Children dear,
 A-quaking in the clinking and the clanking,
 And half bemused with fear,

He carried down the stairs into the Courtyard,
 But there he made no stay,
 He just tied up his Garters, took a deep breath,
 And ran like the wind away.

Past Forest, River, Mountain, River, Forest—
 He coursed the whole night through,
 Till morning found him come into a Country,
 Where none his bad face knew.

Past Mountain, River, Forest, River, Mountain—
 That Thief's lean shanks sped on,
 Till Evening found him knocking at a Daik House,
 His breath now well-nigh gone.

70

80

. 00

There came a little maid and asked his Business ;
 A Cobbler dwelt within ;
 And though she much disliked the Bag he carried,
 She let the Bad Man in.

He bargained with the Cobbler for a lodging
 And soft laid down his Sack—
 In the Dead of Night, with none to spy or listen—
 From off his weary back. 100

And he taught the little Chicks to call him Father,
 And he sold his stolen Pelf,
 And bought a Palace, Horses, Slaves, and Peacocks
 To ease his wicked self.

And though the Children never really loved him,
 He was rich past all belief ;
 While Robin and his Dame o'er Delf and Pewter
 Spent all their Days in Grief.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

32. THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

SIR NAMELESS, once of Athelhall, declared :
 " These wretched children romping in my park
 Trample the herbage till the soil is bared,
 And yap and yell from early morn till dark !
 Go keep them harnessed to their set routines :
 Thank God I've none to hasten my decay ;
 For green remembrance there are better means
 Than offspring, who but wish their sires away."

Sir Nameless of that mansion said anon :
 " To be perpetuate for my mightiness 10
 Sculpture must image me when I am gone."
 —He forthwith summoned carvers there express

To shape a figure stretching seven-odd feet
(For he was tall) in alabaster stone,
With shield, and crest, and casque, and sword complete :
When done a statelier work was never known.

Three hundred years hied ; Church-restorers came,
And, no one of his lineage being traced,
They thought an effigy so large in frame
Best fitted for the floor. There it was placed,
Under the seats for schoolchildren. And they
Kicked out his name, and hobnailed off his nose ;
And, as they yawn through sermon-time, they say,
" Who was this old stone man beneath our toes ? "

THOMAS HARDY.

33.

THE OXEN

CHRISTMAS EVE, and twelve of the clock.

"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years ! Yet, I feel,
If some one said on Christmas Eve,
" Come : see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

10

THOMAS HARDY,

34.

THE BALLAD OF SEMMERWATER

(North-Country Legend.)

DEEP asleep, deep asleep,
 Deep asleep it lies,
 The still lake of Semmerwater
 Under the still skies.

And many a fathom, many a fathom,
 Many a fathom below,
 In a king's tower and a queen's bower
 The fishes come and go.

Once there stood by Semmerwater
 A mickle town and tall ;
 King's tower and queen's bower,
 And the wakeman on the wall.

10

Came a beggar halt and sore :
 "I faint for lack of bread."
 King's tower and queen's bower
 Cast him forth unfed.

He knocked at the door of the herdman's cot,
 The herdman's cot in the dale.
 They gave him of their oatcake,
 They gave him of their ale.

20

He has cursed aloud that city proud,
 He has cursed it in its pride ;
 He has cursed it into Semmerwater
 Down the brant¹ hillside ;
 He has cursed it into Semmerwater,
 There to bide.

¹ steep.

King's tower and queen's bower,
 And a mickle town and tall ;
 By glimmer of scale and gleam of fin,
 Folk have seen them all.

30

King's tower and queen's bower,
 And weed and reed in the gloom ;
 And a lost city in Semmerwater,
 Deep asleep till Doom.

WILLIAM WATSON.

35.

A SPELL

(An Excellent Way to get a Fairy.)

GATHER, first, in your left hand
 (This must be at fall of day)
 Forty grains of wild sea-sand
 Where you think a mermaid lay.
 I have heard that it is best
 If you gather it, warm and sweet,
 Out of the dint of her left breast
 Where you see her heart has beat.

*Out of the dint in that sweet sand
 Gather forty grains, I say ;
 Yet—if it fail you—understand,
 There remains a better way.*

10

Out of this you melt your glass
 While the veils of night are drawn,
 Whispering, till the shadows pass,
 “ *Nixie—pixie—leprechaun !* ”
 Then you blow your magic vial,
 Shape it like a crescent moon,
 Set it up and make your trial,
 Singing, “ *Elaby, ah, come soon !* ”

20

*Round the cloudy crescent go,
On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip toe.
“ Elaby Gathon ! Elaby Gathon !
Nixie—pixie—leprechaun ! ”*

Bring the blood of a white hen
Slaughtered at the break of day.
While the cock, in the fairy glen,
Thrusts his gold neck every way,
Over the brambles, peeing, calling,
Under the ferns, with a sudden fear,
Far and wide—as the dews are falling—
Clamouring, calling, everywhere.

*Round the crimson vial go,
On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip-toe
“ Nixie-pixie, leprechaun ! ”
If this fail, at break of day,
I can show you a better way.*

Bring the buds of the hazel-copse,
Where two lovers kissed at noon ;
Bring the crushed red wild-thyme tops
Where they murmured under the moon.
Bring the four-leaved clover also,
One of the white, and one of the red.
Bring the flakes of the May that fall so
Lightly over their bridal bed.

*Drop them into the vial—so—
On the hill-top, in the dawn,
Singing softly, on tip-toe,
“ Nixie—pixie—leprechaun ! ”
And, if once will not suffice,
Do it thrice !*

30

40

50

*If this fail, at break of day,
There remains a better way.*

Bring an old and crippled child
—*Ah, tread softly, on tip-toe!*—
Tattered, tearless, wonder-wild,
From that under-world below,
Bring a wizened child of seven
Reeking from the City slime,
Out of hell into your heaven,
Set her knee-deep in the thyme.

60

*Feed her—clothe her—even so!
Set her on a fairy throne.
When her eyes begin to glow,
Leave her for an hour—alone.*

You shall need no spells or charms,
On that hill-top, in that dawn.
When she lifts her wasted arms,
You shall see a veil withdrawn.
There shall be no veil between them,
Though her head be old and wise!
You shall know that she has seen them
By the glory in her eyes.

70

*Round her irons on that hill
Earth has tossed a fairy fire :
Watch, and listen, and be still,
Lest you baulk your own desire.*

When she sees four azure wings
Light upon her claw-like hand ;
When she lifts her head and sings,
You shall hear and understand :
You shall hear a bugle calling
Wildly over the dew-dashed down ;

80

And a sound as of the falling
Ramparts of a conquered town.

*You shall hear a sound like thunder ;
And a veil shall be withdrawn,
When her eyes grow wide with wonder* 00
On that hill-top, in that dawn.

ALFRED NOYES.

36.

THE RIVALS

I HEARD a bird at dawn
Singing sweetly on a tree,
That the dew was on the lawn,
And the wind was on the lea ;
But I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me.

I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me
That the dew was on the lawn
And the wind was on the lea ; 10
I was singing at the time
Just as prettily as he.

I was singing all the time,
Just as prettily as he,
About the dew upon the lawn
And the wind upon the lea ;
So I didn't listen to him
And he sang upon a tree.

JAMES STEPHENS.

37.

THE FALLOW DEER
AT THE LONELY HOUSE

One without looks in to-night
 Through the curtain-chink
 From the sheet of glistening white ;
 One without looks in to-night
 As we sit and think
 By the fender-brink.

We do not discern those eyes
 Watching in the snow ;
 Lit by lamps of rosy dyes
 We do not discern those eyes
 Wondering, aglow,
 Fourfooted, tiptoe.

10

THOMAS HARDY.

38.

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

*Land of our Birth, we pledge to thee
 Our love and toil in the years to be ;
 When we are grown and take our place,
 As men and women with our race.*

Father in Heaven, who lovest all,
 Oh, help Thy children when they call ;
 That they may build from age to age,
 An undefiled heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
 With steadfastness and careful truth ;
 That, in our time, Thy Grace may give
 The Truth whereby the Nations live.

10

Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
 Controlled and cleanly n ght and day ,
 That we may bring, if need arise,
 No maimed or worthless sacrifice

Teach us to look in all our ends,
 On Thee for judge, and not our friends ,
 That we, with Thee may walk uncowed
 By fear or favour of the crowd

20

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
 By deed or thought, to huit the weak ,
 That, under Thee, we may possess
 Man's strength to comfort man's distress

Teach us Delight in simple things,
 And Mirth that has no bitter sp'ngs ,
 Forgiveness free of evil done,
 And Love to all men 'neath the sun '

*Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
 For whose dear sake our fathers died ,
 O Motherland, we pledge to thee
 Head, heart, and hand through the years to be '*

30

RUDYARD KIPLING

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. THE WINDMILL

1. Do you think a better title would be *The Miller* ? Why ? There are descriptions of (a) the mill, (b) the miller and (c) the wind, in the poem. Which description do you like best ? Why ?

2. Have you ever seen a windmill ? Why is it called *giddy* ? Read carefully stanzas 2 and 5. Do you think the verbs and adjectives in these stanzas are good ones for description of a mill ?

3. Why is the wind called the miller's *tireless merry slave* ? What else might be the slave of the miller ?

4. Do you think the miller is a rich man ? Why does he give the wind no thanks ?

5. A famous American poet Longfellow wrote a poem about a windmill. It begins :

“ Behold ! a giant am I !
Aloft here in my tower,
With my granite jaws I devour
The maize, and the wheat, and the rye,
And grind them into flour.”

What is the difference between Longfellow's way of describing a mill and the way of the poet in this poem ?

6. Do you know the story of a strange man who thought a windmill was a big giant and began to fight with it ? Write out this story in your own words.

2. IN SEARCH OF A HARE

1. Who is the speaker ? Is he happy ? In what way does the poem seem to be merry and joyous ?

2. Does the ending surprise you ? Would you have expected to see a hare ? Have you seen all the animals and birds and reptiles mentioned in the poem ?

3. Tell in a brief composition the adventures you have had, or might have, in search of a butterfly.

4. [After learning the poem by heart.]

Mention the names of all the creatures in this poem. Place beside their names the verbs and adjectives used of them, thus :

an adder—DARTED.

a GRIZZLED vixen.

What do you notice about these verbs and adjectives ?

5. What do you mean by rime ? Write down some rimes that occur in the poem.

3. THE SCARECROW

1. Have you ever seen a scarecrow ? Make a picture of one. What would the scarecrow look like at midnight “neath a maze of stars” ? Why are his eyes called *void* ?

2. Why is Spring called a child ? Who are Spring’s host of children ?

3. Write in a short composition the opinion of a crow concerning a scarecrow.

4. Why does the scarecrow talk of Man as his *strange* master ?

5. Explain the meaning of the lines :

(a) Some rapture in my rags awakes.

(b) And stand, above the stubble, stiff
As mail at morning prime.

(c) Soon shall I gaze across a sea
Of sun-begotten grain.

Why does the poet speak of a *sea* of grain ?

4. THE SONG OF THE SOU'-WESTER

1. Why did the wind laugh “at the militant ways of man” ? Tell a story you know from English history in which the wind proved more powerful than Man’s ships and guns.

2. In this poem the wind is treated as a *person*. Write out passages from the poem which show this. Do you know a fairy-tale in which the wind is called “South-West Wind, Esquire” ? If you do, tell it in your own words.

3. How can you tell from this poem that the ship was pitching and tossing ?

4. Have you ever heard the wind *sing* ? What kind of song does it sing on land ? Where do you hear the song best ?

5. The word *rollicking* is used. Could this be called a rollicking poem? Give your reasons. Do you think this poem would go well to music? Why so?

5. ROUNDABOUTS AND SWINGS

1. Why does the poet speak of a "painted caravan"? Does the gipsy love pretty colours? How did he become so sunburnt and wrinkled up? Why is he called a *Pharaoh*?

2. Write a short paragraph of your own, describing the evening when the gipsy travelled along the lane. Draw a little picture to go with your paragraph.

3. Is the gipsy in this poem a contented man? There is a gipsy in a famous book who said he would live for ever for the sake of the sun and moon and stars and the wind on the heath. Do you think this gipsy loved such things more than his earnings? Compare him with the miller in the first poem.

4. You hear people say nowadays that "losses on the roundabouts are gains upon the swings." What do they mean?

5. Who is supposed to be speaking in this poem? Why is the language so homely?

6. THE PORTSMOUTH ROAD

1. Do you think this a sad or a happy poem? In it there is a young man and an old man. Which is the happier? Why?

2. What is the season of the year when the young man goes, and what is the season when the old man returns? What is the meaning of "the wayside fires were white and cold" in the fourth stanza?

3. Do you think it would spoil the poem if the stormcock and the gipsy were left out of it? Why do you think they were not there when the man came back?

4. Read the poem aloud. Do you think it gives you the idea of someone walking along a road? Do you think the little refrain makes the poem more beautiful?

5. This poem will remind you of a song you have often sung or heard. Write out as much of the song as you can.

7. THE CARAVAN

1. Who is speaking? What kind of books or tales had he been reading? Have you ever read such tales yourself? Write a brief composition about any you have read.

2. What would you like to do if you were a gipsy boy or girl ?
3. What is the difference between the boy in this poem and the young man in *The Portsmouth Road* (No. 6) ? Which of the poems do you like the better ?
4. Let the horse in the poem tell of his travelling adventures.
5. Write a short imaginary conversation between the speaker in this poem and the 'Pharaoh' of No. 5.

8. CALLED UP

1. When do you think this poem was written ? Of what events does it tell ?
2. Who was Sir Francis ? Tell something about him. Do you know another poem written about him ? If so, write out one stanza of it.
3. Quote lines from the poem which refer to :
 - (a) aeroplanes ; (b) submarines ; (c) searchlights ; (d) wireless ; (e) big naval guns.
4. How did Lord Nelson and Sir Francis know "they ha' thought of you an' me" ? Did the sailors really think of them ?
5. Write a short paragraph in which the Duke of Wellington talks to Napoleon about the Battle of Ypres during the Great War.
6. What do you mean by "show a leg" and "round-shot." ? Which part of this poem is in italic print ? In what kind of language are the two men talking ?

9. OFF THE GROUND

1. Write in your own prose the story of the Three Jolly Farmers.
2. Which part of the poem interests you more—the homely part at the beginning or the fanciful mermaid part at the end ?
3. Why do all the names of villages in the poem begin with W ? Write a similar group of towns beginning with H.
4. How does the expression in the poem represent :
 - (a) the dancing of the farmers ; (b) the singing of the mermaids ?
5. Draw a picture or a map to illustrate the journey of the Farmers to the sea.
6. Imagine that Bates and Giles write an epitaph on Turvey. Write down such an epitaph.
7. In what other poem do you read the tale of the ~~visit~~ of a mortal to a mermaid ?

10. THE LITTLE YOUNG LAMBS

1. Who, do you think, was the "shepherd old man"? Make a little picture of him. What kind of a tune was it he played? Do you think it was anything like the tune the Pied Piper played to the children?

2. How does the poem tell you that the little lambs became happy when they heard the tune? How would you read aloud the second stanza?

3. In what month do you imagine the shepherd was piping to the lambs? What seasons and what doings in the country does the last stanza remind you of?

4. Why, do you think, do all the stanzas end in almost the same way? Do you think you could sing the words of this poem to the tune of the old shepherd's pipe?

11. THE WIND

1. Who is speaking? Would you imagine it to be a little boy just going to beat? Why so?

2. On what sort of a night would the wind act like this? Does the wind often get the rain to help him?

3. "Then waits a moment breathlessly." What does this line mean? Is the wind really out of breath? Have you ever heard the wind waiting a moment? When?

4. Write down some verbs that express the sound of wind. Turn back to *The Song of the Sou'-West'r* (No. 4) to help you. How is the wind in this poem different from the wind in No. 4?

5. Write down a few lines of another poem you know that tells of the wind as a mischievous creature.

12. RIME FAIRIES

1. What kind of picture do the rime fairies make on the window-pane? Describe it in your own words. "A peephole left to show The misty world beyond." Is the world beyond generally misty when the rime fairies come?

2. How were the voices of the streams silenced? What are the *gleaming chains*, the *diamonds*, the *thousand gems*, in the poem? Why does the wood become an *enchanted* wood?

3. Suppose the spider mentioned in stanza 3 had met one of the fairies after the fairy had made his web so beautiful. Imagine and write down a conversation between the spider and the fairy.

4. What mischief would there be when the sun got out of bed ? Do you think the sun was afraid of the fairies, or were they afraid of him ?

5. Find the nouns in this poem that have adjectives to describe them. Write the nouns and adjectives side by side. Do you think the adjectives are good ones ? Which of them especially so ?

6. How does the sun light " the candles of the dawn " on the trees ?

13. ELVES IN THE FIRE

1. Why is everything *red* in this poem ? Suppose the poet were to write about the elves in the heather and the elves in the grass, what colour would be found in his poems ?

2. What is the season of this poem ? When will you yourself see the horsemen ride ?

3. What are (a) the caverns, (b) the red rivers, (c) the taverns, (d) the cliff-edge, (e) the trenches, mentioned in stanzas 2 and 3 ? Can you understand what is meant by ?—

- (i) each captain In front of his troop ;
- (ii) Down-treading, o'erthrowing
Tower, rampart and keep.

4. Can you really hear the horsemen when you lean down and listen ? What do you think the poet means by this ?

14. PUK-WUDJIES

1. The " colour " of *Elves in the Fire* was red. What colour could you give to this poem ? Give some reasons with your answer.

2. Who are the Puk-Wudjies, do you think ? Do you like them better than the elves in the last poem ?

3. " The great spiky chestnuts." Have you ever found any ? Do you think this is a good description of them ? Describe a chestnut when its spiky covering is taken away. In the same way write your own descriptions of (a) an acorn in its cup, (b) a beech-nut in its husk, (c) a brown leaf in Autumn.

4. What is the *moon wrack* ? Draw a little picture to show what you mean. Write down and learn the lines about the *wind* and the *rain* in this poem.

5. Read the poem aloud. How does the poet get the *sound* of Autumn into it ?

15. THE SHADOW PEOPLE

1. Why didn't Bridget hear the fairy music ? Have you ever heard it ? Where is the best place for hearing it ?

2. What kind of a village is pictured in this poem ? Describe it in your own words.

3. Who are the shadow people really ? Would they frighten you ? Do you think they are related to the red-horsemen and the Puk-Wudjies ?

4. "And the mushroom's parasol
 Opens in the moonlit rain."

What do these two lines mean ? Are they true ? Do you think them beautiful ? Why ?

5. Do you think the poet who wrote this poem was unhappy ? Did he really want to be free, with the shadow people ? He was a soldier and was killed in the Great War. Does the knowledge of this make the poem more beautiful to you ? Why ?

16. CRAB-APPLE

1. Who is speaking ? Have you ever had such a dream as this ? How big do you imagine a fairy to be ?

2. What do you imagine the game of "Dew-ponds" to be ? From your imagination describe it in your own words.

3. Where do the fairies dance usually ? Have you ever seen the marks of their feet ? Where ? What supplied the music ? Where did they have their supper afterwards ?

4. What is a crab-apple ? How did it become so magical when the fairies spoke of it ?

17. THE SONG OF THE IRON-WORKER

1. Have you ever watched a blacksmith at work in his forge ? Find the passages in this poem that illustrate the *sound* of his working.

2. What makes you think this poem is of the country rather than of the town ?

3. Make a picture of "Time's solemn glass." How does the poet make you feel that iron is an eternal thing ?

4. Who was Queen Eleanor ? Do you think the poet is correct in what she says about the queen's tomb ? Is iron better than gold and precious stones ?

5. What do these words mean?—*creasset*; *coulter*; *foison*; *lattice*; *pied*; *benison*. How does iron “make granaries full”?

6. St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, was an amateur iron-worker and the patron saint of blacksmiths. Who is the patron saint of (a) England, (b) Ireland, (c) Scotland, (d) Wales, (e) France?

18. FAIRYLAND

1. This poem was written by an Indian poet. Would you imagine so from your reading of the poem? Write out some lines or passages that would make you think so.

2. How is this poem different from the other poems of Fairyland in this book? Why is this poem entitled *Fairyland*?

3. If you wished to find Fairyland in your garden, where would you look for it? Why?

4. Who are the king and the princess and the barber?

5. Can you understand why jewels and precious stones are mentioned so frequently in this poem?

19. THE HERO

1. Who is speaking in this poem and in No. 18? What makes you think the speaker is fond of story books?

2. Describe briefly, in your own words, (a) the boy, (b) his mother, (c) his brother.

3. What makes you think the scene of this poem is not laid in England? Answer as fully as you can, and quote some passages in illustration.

4. How do these two poems (Nos. 18 and 19) differ from all the others in the book?

20. STREET LANTERNS

1. Do you think the writer of this poem loved the town better than the country? Why so? Do you like the town better than the country in autumn? Why?

2. Why is there an unwonted silence “in between the turning wheels”?

3. Why are the jewels mentioned at the end of the poem? How would you describe the beauty of the country roads in the same kind of way?

4. The poet does not mention the man who sits by his fire watching the lanterns all night. Describe him in your own words. Then try to add a little stanza describing him.

5. Do you think a poet could write a very long poem in little stanzas like this ? Give reasons for your answer.

21. THE CUCKOO

1. You are sure to have heard a cuckoo. Does his voice seem "to run before" you ? Tell any legend or story you know about the cuckoo.

2. Does the poet appear to regard the cuckoo as a happy bird ? Do you ? In far-off days people used to think of him as the mournful bird that brought them sorrow. Can you say why ?

3. What else beside the roses would the voice of the cuckoo call back ? Where are his "world of the emerald" and his "bath in the blue" ?

4. Imagine that a cuckoo and a blackbird have a conversation. Write down what they say.

5. Why is the fourth line of each stanza repeated ?

22. THE KINGFISHER

1. Why was the name of the Rainbow's mother *Tears* ? Why does the poet call the kingfisher the child of the Rainbow ? Does the poet think of the kingfisher as a sad bird ?

2. Describe a peacock. What is the point of the comparison "as proud as a peacock" ? Why does the poet tell the kingfisher to go and live with the peacocks ?

3. How does the poet liken himself to the kingfisher ? What kind of life do you think the poet would lead ?

4. Of what flower could the poet have written a poem like this ? What is the idea he wishes to emphasise ?

23. THE SQUIRREL

1. The poet seems to think of the tree first as a house and then as a ship. Can you tell why ? What are the *rafters* and the *roof* of the tree, and the *mast* and the *rigging* of the ship ?

2. What is it that the man loves best about the squirrel ? Do you think he likes the squirrel better than the birds ?

3. Is the poet thinking of the tree in summer or in autumn time ? How can you tell ?

4. Explain the meaning of these passages :

- (a) Stanza 1, ll. 7 and 8.
- (b) Stanza 2, l. 5.
- (c) Stanza 3, ll. 1-4.

24. JENNY WREN

1. "A foot to me's a mile to her." Why? How does the poet bring out the *littleness* of Jenny Wren?

2. What does the poet mean by saying that Jenny Wren burst into "a sudden storm of song"? What kind of a song would it be?

3. Read this poem with *The Kingfisher* (No. 22). Which of the two birds do you think the poet likes the better? How do these two poems show us the mood of the writer?

4. Imagine you went for a walk in the country with Mr. Davies. What would he talk of and do?

25. THE TOLL-GATE HOUSE

1. Have you ever seen a toll-gate? What were toll-gates used for? Who was the old man who lived at the toll-gate house?

2. Make a picture of the house and the toll-gate as they are described in this poem.

3. What is it that the old man sees as his lantern swings? Is it a real horseman or a dream one? Why, do you imagine, does he see him only on Michaelmas night?

4. When do you think the incident described in this poem occurred? Suppose the poem were written of modern times, what would the old man see passing his toll-gate?

5. To what does *lonely* refer in line 5? What are the three dots for at the end of lines 8 and 10?

26. DAYS TOO SHORT

1. How does a rill sing? Who writes of the music of a brook? Quote a few lines of his poem.

2. Have you ever seen butterflies make side-leaps? Why does the poet say that they have "escaped from Nature's hand Ere perfect quite"?

3. What are the "fragrant deeps" where bees stand upon their heads? Is this a true picture?

4. When are small clouds " silvery white " ? What do you imagine " a broken rimmed moon " to be ?
5. " When such things are." When are such things ?
6. What does the poet mean by " the veil of Night " ?

27. " TREASURE ISLAND "

1. Why is this poem called " Treasure Island " ? What is the " book in the dingy binding " ? Have you ever read it ? Do you like it ?
2. On what kind of an afternoon was the boy reading the book ? What do the first two lines of the poem mean ? Explain the meaning of :
 " . . . the flaming flower-beds crumbled,
 At tap of the sea-cook's crutch."
3. " The Master's wondrous cunning." What do you know of him ?
4. Who is speaking in this poem ? Why is there a break after Stanza 3 ?
5. What are *Pieces of Eight* ? Where were they found ?
6. What other wondrous tale was told to a child on a summer afternoon ? Tell what you know of it.

28. THE BALLAD OF SIR BORS

1. Who was Sir Bors ? What was he seeking ? What was the cup of the Holy Grail ?
2. How does this poem describe " the cool grey hush of the dusk " ? Do you think it gives you a good description of twilight and evening in the countryside ?
3. What did the red rose represent ? Can you understand and explain the birds that sing and have their nest in the rose ?
4. Why is the horse of Sir Bors " spavined and ribbed " and his sword " rotten with rust " ?
5. " A star will glow like a note God strikes on a silver bell." What does this line mean ?
6. To what company of knights did Sir Bors belong ? Tell the story of another of that company. Which one of them found the Holy Grail ?
7. Quote examples of *repetition* in this poem. What is the effect of this device ?

29. SHERWOOD

1. Where is Sherwood ? Write a sentence or two about each of the people mentioned in this poem. Where do you read of them all ?
2. Which stanzas describe Spring-time in England ? Where is there a reference to Autumn ?
3. Would you call this a *dream* poem ? Why do the fairies come into it ? When you read it carefully it seems to be full of shadows and twilight. Why ? Explain "Dawn is in the skies" in stanza 5.
4. Choose what you think to be the most beautifully sounding adjectives in the poem, and write them down with their nouns. Quote what you think to be the three most musical passages.
5. Was Robin Hood asleep ? What does this poem mean ? In what way can you liken it to *Treasure Island*, No. 27 ?

30. GREENAWAY

1. Whose mother was it that looked out of the window to the sea ? In what famous story book can you read a tale very much like this ?
2. To what period of history does this poem refer ? What was (a) the fabled West ; (b) the tropic sea ; (c) the Spanish Main ? Tell any story you know of any of these.
3. Find and write down the passages in this poem that give you a picture of the river and the sea and ships. Do you think these pictures beautiful ? Make an actual picture suggested by one such passage.
4. What does this poem tell you about exploration ?
5. Do you know of a famous picture which may have suggested this poem ? If you do, describe it.
6. This poem goes with a good swing. Do you think it would become monotonous if it were a longer poem ?
7. Explain these lines :
 - (a) The gift of the sea, and the doom of the sea, and the faith of a craven king.
 - (b) The world to be woed and conquered was a quest that was still untried.
 - (c) Good luck to you, young Squire Raleigh, and keep your eye on the Don.

31. THE THIEF AT ROBIN'S CASTLE

1. This is a story poem. Tell its story in your own simple prose.
2. Whom do you imagine Robin to be ? Why does the poet surround him with such riches ?
3. Do you think the poet means that the thief was really a man ? How does he emphasise the quiet stealing into Robin's castle ? Pick out from the poem the passages about the moon, and say why you like them.
4. Of what fairy tale does this poem remind you ? Do you think the poem was suggested to the poet by a fairy tale ?
5. Here are some queer words in this poem : *shin-shining* ; *thinning* ; *gotten* ; *shapen* ; *piggle-dy* ; *Pochette* ; *Knick-knackerie* ; *eft-soones* ; *Pelf*. What do they mean ? Why does the poet use them ?
6. Why has the poet begun so many of his words with a capital letter ?
7. Do you prefer the beginning of the poem to the ending ? Give your reasons.

32. THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

1. What would have been your opinion of Sir Nameless ? Do you think the poet's opinion is the same ?
2. What do lines 2 and 3 of the second stanza mean ? Was Sir Nameless really mighty ? Why did he ask the carvers to represent him as a soldier ?
3. "Who was this old stone man beneath our toes" ? What might Sir Nameless have said if he could have looked forward 300 years ?

33. THE OXEN

1. Write in simple language the legend referred to. What is the reason for the legend ? Do you know of any other legend like it ?

2. "So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years."

What years ? Of what men and of what times is the poet thinking ?

3. Mr. Hardy has written some famous and very beautiful stories about the West Country and the countryfolk. Would you imagine so from this poem ? What would make you think he loves the country ?

4. "Hoping it might be so." Why does the poet hope? Do you think the last two lines have a little sadness about them? Why?

34. THE BALLAD OF SEMMERWATER

1. A ballad is sometimes said to be "a half-told tale in rime." Do you think this poem is a real ballad?

2. What is a *mickle* town? Where is the town of this poem said to be? What was the reason of the beggar's curse? What do you imagine happened to the herdman?

3. The last poem told a legend of the West and this one gives us a legend of the North. Can you see any differences in them? What other legend do you know like this concerning a town under the sea?

4. Do you know of any other poem that tells you of the "glimmer of scale and gleam of fin" at the bottom of the sea?

5. Notice how words and phrases are repeated. Can you tell why? Do you think this repetition makes the poem more beautiful? Why so?

35. A SPELL

1. What is a spell? Do you think you would ever catch a fairy like this? What kind of a spell would a witch be likely to use?

2. Make a list of things, mentioned in this poem, that belong to the spell. What do you notice about them all? Do you think the last spell is really the best?

3. What times of day and times of year are mentioned? Why are they mentioned so often? Can you understand why the moon comes in two or three times?

4. Look at the words you have to say with the spell. Can you understand anything of them? Make up some words and phrases of your own that might be uttered with the spell.

5. Which parts of this poem could you *sing* best? What kind of a tune would the words go to? Do you think you could *dance* to the tune?

36. THE RIVALS

1. Account for the title. Who is the speaker?
2. There are several lines repeated in this poem. What is the effect of the repetition?

3. On what kind of a day was the bird singing ? What kind of bird do you imagine it to be ?
4. Do you know other poems in which a bird sings (a) in April, (b) in Winter ? If so, say something about them.
5. What would a nightingale sing about ?

37. THE FALLOW DEER AT THE LONELY HOUSE

1. How would you read this poem aloud ?
2. Why do the deer look in at the lonely house ? Why wouldn't this poem be so beautiful if the poet had written of *dogs* instead of *deer* ?
3. What makes the atmosphere of this poem strange and weird ?
4. Notice the poet's description of the eyes of the deer. Describe a cat's eye looking from the darkness into your window.
5. In what way is this poem similar to Mr. Hardy's *The Oxen* ?

38. THE CHILDREN'S SONG

1. What children are supposed to be singing this song ?
2. Write down in your own words the lessons the children want to be taught. What is the foundation of all of them ?
3. Do you think Mr. Kipling loves war or peace ? Suppose the League of Nations wanted a motto. Do you think this poem would do ?
4. What does stanza 5 mean ?
5. This poem was written about twenty years ago. What special meaning does this fact give to the lines ?—

"That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice."

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